

Minutes of the Work Meeting of the Board of Commissioners, Carbon County, State of Utah, held April 6, 2016 at the Administration Building, Price, Utah, commencing at 3:00 p.m.

Those present: Jae Potter, Commission Chair - Excused
Casey Hopes, Acting Commission Chair
Jake Mellor, Commissioner

Also present: Seth Oveson, Clerk/Auditor
Lori Perez, Deputy Clerk
Christian Bryner, Attorney
Justin Needles, Emergency Services
Hal Stevens, Forest Service
Brandon Jensen, Forest Service
Angela White, State Emergency Services
Jeremy Jorgensen, Fire Marshal
Rudy Sandoval, Area Fire Management Officer

Clerk's Certificate of Compliance with Open Meeting Law was filed.

Commissioner Hopes welcomed everyone and introduced Hal Stevens and Brandon Jensen.
The meeting began at 3:00 p.m.

1) Annual update on Forest Service projects and activities – Hal Stevens

Hal said that each year the Forest Service is mandated to hold a cooperative meeting with local officials. This year Chief Tom Tidwell from the Forest Service wants the focus to be on alleviating and mitigating risk. Life First is a training program that teaches to stop, think and talk before acting. The goal is to do everything you can at every fire using the risk analysis assessment to alleviate risk. The Forest Service is mandated to take care of the lands that they administer but the safety of the responders is priority.

Rudy Sandoval and Jeremy Jorgensen from the State Forestry, Fire and Lands joined the meeting.

Hal said there are three phases of the fire season: the pre-season, the fire season and the post fire season.

Justin Needles said he is aware of the fire protocol and has attended several meetings concerning the pre-season planning. Hal discussed the training schedule including Brandon going to St. George to help the central area with their academy and Angie doing a pre-season meeting next week in Green River.

Hal discussed the previous fire history including early fire restrictions and the Oak City and Seeley Fires in 2012. The prediction for the current three month outlook is that it will be warmer and wetter than normal. The extra moisture is a double edge sword because it will cause the fine fuels and brush to grow which will dry out and cause a more robust fire season later on.

Hal reviewed the seasonal hiring and the changes in personnel within the Forest Service. Commissioner Mellor asked Hal to let Sandy know of job openings so that the County can help get the word out. Hal said perspective seasonal employees have to have applications in by January. Hal explained the Women in Fire Program which is used to hire and train women for fire management. An orientation class will be held in Richfield on Saturday. This is a grant based program. The Forest Service does hire local but they need to be fire qualified and have attended fire school.

Hal said another purpose of this meeting is for everyone to meet each other before an emergency happens. He explained WFDSS, Wild Land Fire Decision Support System, which develops ways to respond to fire situations. Hal said they can do simulations to see how WFDSS works and how the County could be involved if interested. These trainings take forty-five minutes. Justin said he is familiar with WFDSS from his old job. Commissioner Hopes asked how involved the Commission would be in an event. Justin said they could be involved or just kept updated as the event happens.

Hal explained how the WFDSS system works and how they can create scenarios of what could happen and the risks. Rudy said the State Forestry, Fire and Land would represent the County in the WFDSS process and would be in contact all the time.

Jeremy Jorgenson was introduced as the new Carbon/Emery Fire Warden who started on Monday.

Commissioner Hopes asked Justin Needles to keep the Commissioners updated with any fire events and Jeremy Jorgenson said he would do the same thing.

Hal said there are two types of incident management teams in the nation. These teams take on the bigger more complex fire situations or any time there is a fatality. Our region is #4 which takes in all of Utah, Nevada, the Arizona Strip and southern Idaho. There are two Type 1 teams and six Type 2 teams. Hal is on a Type 2 team. These teams involve a lot of volunteers and pre-planning. For more information the Moab Interagency Fire Center website is linked to the Great Basin team. This website will show what teams are on call and in what rotation.

Hal explained the suppression levels for a natural fire versus a man caused fire. He showed the red and green map which explains dispatch areas.

Commissioner Hopes asked if funding had been allocated. Hal said there is not a lot of funding available. They discussed the catastrophic Seeley Fire and areas in Huntington Canyon where heavy rain could continue to create problems in the burn scar area. Fires affecting critical water sources would be suppressed.

Commissioner Mellor asked about fire suppression in archaeological areas. Hal said the BLM has identified these areas as priority for fire suppression including Range Creek. The BLM priority is Sage Grouse habitat and if Sage Grouse gets listed as endangered then things would change.

Hal said they will continue to refine the fire suppression map. Depending on the preparedness level, the conditions of the fuels, the weather they will start to make assessments. They have protocols to work through like completing the incident risk assessment, going through the risk analysis, and completing two way risk communication in order to make sure everyone is on the same page.

The second map Hal showed documents the fuels in our area. He explained what each color means. There is a company out of Moroni who just received a timber permit for dead trees up near Skyline Mine in the Manti La Sal Forest. They will shred the dead trees for turkey bedding in the poultry business. The discussion continued concerning projects east of Ephraim, in Range Creek and the La Sal Mountains.

Hal explained the five rights: the right plan, the right place, the right time, the right duration, and the right assets. The Forest Service wants input from everyone to see what local people would like to have done. Hal asked about a lands council meeting in Carbon County and Commissioner Mellor said Emery County is more involved. Commissioner Mellor said Rex Sacco is our lands specialist. Hal will contact him to see how they can help his office. Justin Needles will also be involved in these discussions.

No prescribed fires have been scheduled except for small random burns of debris. Hal said they do know there is a major problem up near Potters Pond but the transmission lines are in the way and they will do what they can to mitigate if and when a fire starts there.

Hal expressed his appreciation to the Commissioners for their time. Brandon Jensen has been encouraged to be involved with various Home Owners Association meetings and any public meetings that are adjacent to the forest. The Forest Service will also be visiting local elementary schools with Smoky Bear in order to get the fire prevention message out.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

ATTEST:

Seth Oveson, County Clerk/Auditor

